



Little Tokyo Community Council
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Councilmember David E. Ryu
Chair – Health, Education and Neighborhood Councils Committee
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Support for Community Impact Stakeholder category for Neighborhood Councils

Dear Councilmember Ryu,

On behalf of the Little Tokyo Community Council, I am writing to urge you to maintain the Community Impact Stakeholder category for Neighborhood Councils in the City of LA, and suggest that this category be an option that each Neighborhood Council may choose for its own circumstances. The Little Tokyo Community Council is the 501(c)(3) nonprofit community coalition of businesses, residents, churches, temples, community and cultural organizations and other vested stakeholders. I raise the constituencies that LTCC represents not just to articulate who we are, but also because the importance and value of the wide-ranging variety of stakeholders in the Little Tokyo community is truly an integral part of Little Tokyo's foundation. Our community has always been more than a neighborhood of businesses and residents – the religious, cultural, and community institutions are a core to the fabric of our historic neighborhood. Therefore, as the community coalition that represents the Little Tokyo neighborhood, we argue that the Community Impact Stakeholder category is a vital means to allow longtime community stakeholders to remain involved in Little Tokyo, and urge you to maintain this category as an option for neighborhood councils to use.

At 134 years old, Little Tokyo is the second oldest neighborhood in Los Angeles, and one of three remaining historic Japantowns. Little Tokyo has been and continues to be home, hub, and heart of the Japanese and Japanese American community in the Southern California region and beyond. It is home to the country's sole Japanese American National Museum, which boasts over tens of thousands of members and donors. The largest Japanese American Cultural & Community Center in Southern California is based in Little Tokyo. Little Tokyo is also home to eight churches and temples, including major centers such as Higashi Hongwanji (established 1904) and Nishi Hongwanji (established 1905), which both serve as the 'mother temples' to several temples across the region, and are located in Little Tokyo, serving generations of families who remain actively connected to Little Tokyo.

As with many ethnic neighborhoods in Los Angeles, Little Tokyo remains the focal point for many people who celebrate their culture in Southern California. Thousands of people attend Oshogatsu (Japanese New Year) festivities in Little Tokyo every year, and tens of thousands of people celebrate Nisei Week (the longest standing ethnic festival of its kind in the nation) annually in Little Tokyo. Little Tokyo also has a very dense concentration of community organizations, which ties countless individuals to this historic space. Truly, we are a community that cares deeply about what is happening in our historic neighborhood, and remain actively engaged on neighborhood issues. It's vitally important that our stakeholders, many of whom live or work miles from downtown, can continue to participate and vote in Neighborhood Council

The Little Tokyo Community Council is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) community coalition representing the interests of Little Tokyo, with membership from businesses, residents, community organizations, religious institutions, and other vested stakeholders in the Little Tokyo community.



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issues that affect a neighborhood they have been active in for several generations. To disenfranchise these voices would be to effectively disenfranchise and disempower the voice of Little Tokyo.

Thank you for your leadership in undertaking reforms for the City's Neighborhood Council system. We hope you will seriously consider our recommendation for this important stakeholder category.

Sincerely,

Kristin Fukushima
Managing Director, Little Tokyo Community Council